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SECRET/SENSITIVE  
EYES ONLY

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLY

INFORMATION

December 28, 1972

State Dept. review  
completed

MORI/CDF C03316848

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

25X1

FROM: Robert Gerald Livingston

25X1

SUBJECT:  Italian Reaction on Bombing

SECRET/SENSITIVE  
EYES ONLY

XGDS (2)  
BYAUTH - CIA (Signer)

SECRET/SENSITIVE  
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ITALY

Ambassador Martin reports from Rome (Tab B) that the Foreign Ministry explained to him December 29 that the Andreotti government's weak parliamentary position compelled it to take some official notice of the bombing. It had reluctantly concluded that otherwise there would be a parliamentary motion and debate on Vietnam which might even bring down the government if the Christian Democrat left should defect. The government hoped that we would understand the necessity for this forestalling action.

The Prime Minister's office today subsequently issued a statement saying:

"The Council of Ministers -- interpreting the common feeling of the Italian people -- has instructed the Foreign Minister to renew his insistence for the bombing to be stopped and peace negotiations to be resumed."

Ambassador Martin is hopeful that this will help the government succeed in averting a parliamentary vote.

RGL:mm

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-08 H-02 INR-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 IO-12 DPW-01 OMB-01 T-03

ER-11 NIC-01 RSR-01 EURE-00 /113W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6648  
INFO USDEL PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7907

SUBJECT: ITALIAN REPRESENTATION ON RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS  
AND CESSATION OF BOMBING

REF: A) ROME 7843; B) ROME 7899

1. GAJA, SEC GEN FOREIGN MINISTRY, ASKED AMBASSADOR TO CALL ON HIM THIS MORNING. GAJA TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT A DECISION HAD BEEN "MOST RELUCTANTLY" REACHED THAT THE FRAGILE INTERNAL BALANCE OF PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT SIMPLY FORCED THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE SOME OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE RENEWED BOMBING. OTHERWISE, THERE WOULD BE A MOTION FILED IN PARLIAMENT WHICH WOULD CAUSE A DIVISIVE DEBATE. WITH THE NARROWNESS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, IT COULD RESULT IN AN ADVERSE VOTE WITH THE DEFECTION OF ELEMENTS OF THE DC LEFT. THIS, IT WAS CONCLUDED, COULD NOT ONLY MAKE THE SITUATION MUCH WORSE BETWEEN US OVER VIETNAM, BUT COULD QUITE POSSIBLY BRING DOWN THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT. FOR THESE REASONS, GAJA HOPED WE WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THIS MORNING WAS CAREFULLY DESIGNED TO FORESTALL A SITUATION WHICH WOULD BE WORSE FOR BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES. IT WAS HOPED THAT THE ACTION OF THE COUNCIL WOULD PUT THE QUESTION ON ICE FOR THE TIME BEING.

2. AMBASSADOR TOLD GAJA THAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD THE RATIONALE

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HE HOPED THE STATEMENT WOULD BE EVEN-HANDED WITH SOME RECOGNITION THAT NORTH VIETNAM COULD HAVE A CEASE-FIRE IMMEDIATELY IF THEY WOULD SIMPLY AGREE TO THE FAIR AND JUST PROPOSALS MADE BY THE AMERICAN SIDE. GAJA SAID EVERY EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO SEE THAT THE STATEMENT WAS SO DRAFTED. HE ALSO SAID ORTONA HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO APPROACH DEPARTMENT BUT DOUBTED HE WOULD BE IN POSITION TO SO CLEARLY ENUNCIATE THE RATIONALE HE HAD JUST GIVEN.

3. COUNCIL LATER THIS MORNING RELEASED FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

"THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS HEARD A REPORT FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON THE VIETNAM SITUATION AND HAS APPROVED THE ACTION TAKEN WITH THE USG INTENDED TO SOLICIT A RESUMPTION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, HOPING THAT EVERY OTHER PARTY INTERESTED IN A JUST PEACE WILL COLLABORATE IN CONCLUDING THE TALKS.

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THE SURE INTERPRETER OF THE COMMON SENTIMENTS OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE, HAS CHARGED THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO RENEW HIS INSISTENCE FOR THE CESSATION OF THE BOMBING AND THE RESUMPTION OF PEACE TALKS."

4. COMMENT: REFTEL A GIVES MORE DETAILED EXPLANATION OF PARLIAMENTARY MANEUVERING WHICH LED TO COUNCIL DECISION. WE BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE THE SUPPORT OF MORE AND OTHERS IN DAMPENING DOWN ANY FURTHER CRITICISM AND THAT THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY OF PREVENTING A VOTE IN PARLIAMENT.

GDS. MARTIN

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